The Prince's Knight

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The Prince's Knight

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Summary

Prince Will is too young to fight.

The idea of him learning a fighting skill at all takes much cajoling, his father relenting when he tells Will he can learn fencing by one of his most trusted knights now home from a decade long mission.

Knight Hannibal Lecter is not a nice man.

He fights hard for his king, his station, and after spending years in a pointless war the last thing he wants to do is teach the king’s spoiled son something so simple as fencing so the boy can show off in front of the princesses in waiting.

Neither of them expects to fall in love.

Chapter 1

Prince Will is too young to fight.

His father says so, often patting him on the back and laughing that he has soldiers who take care of such things and the silly thoughts in his son's head should just stay there. Will hates it, hates his title and hates the thought that he will sit on the side while other young men his age go to war while he preens for the princesses his father parades in front of him.

The idea of him learning a fighting skill at all takes much cajoling, his father relenting when he tells Will he can learn fencing by one of his most trusted knights now home from a decade long mission.

Knight Hannibal Lecter is not a nice man.

He fights hard for his king, his station, and after spending years in a pointless war the last thing he wants to do is teach the king's spoiled son something so simple as fencing so the boy can show off in front of the princesses in waiting. The first time he meets Will he is relentless, angry at the circumstances that bring them together to the point where he hurts the prince enough that he's asked breathlessly to stop.

Hannibal does not expect to see Will again, though he is out patrolling when he spots the young Prince fighting an invisible enemy in the darkness obviously practicing after only one lesson. The idea that the boy wants to learn so badly makes him feel like the worst king of monster, their next lesson he teaches more slowly until they find themselves together more often than not.

The first time Will bests him he's full of such pride, a deep smile appearing without his consent and Will hugs him without thought their closeness a shock that suddenly the knight does not want to let end. They pull apart and Will stares at him, his eyes wide and embarrassed those eyes looking down at his lips more than once before Hannibal pulls away.

He is a fool.

The Prince has not come to a single lesson in over a week, his attentions elsewhere with the newest princess to visit the castle, Princess Mollyana. He patrols more often than not outside when they have their meetings, Will laughing at things the young woman says and not once noticing him skulking about in the shadows.

Jealousy is not something he thought he'd ever feel, not ever in all of his life has he before, and now it was starting to seem like he'd continue to feel it for the rest of his life if the rumors were anything to go by.

"I hear the Prince is going to marry her," Crawford says, handing him his glass as they sit together one evening not long after the princess has gone home.

Hannibal feels his lip curl in disgust at the idea, Will living that life when the only time Hannibal has ever seen Will happy as with a sword in his hand.

“I have heard the rumors.”

Jack eyes him carefully. “You are the worst at keeping your thoughts and feelings to yourself, my friend, you are aware of this?”

Hannibal says nothing, drinking his mead as his friend continues.

“The boy has stopped going to your lessons,” Jack offers, sipping, “But he has not stopped practicing.”

Hannibal pauses, his hand stiff as he stares. “You have seen him?”

“I have,” Jack smiles, “And I have heard him watch you when you cannot see him.”

Hannibal sets down his glass, “He is a prince, and it is not…”

“His father wants a successor, and Will wants to be a fighter not a lover. Why can’t he be all three?”

Hannibal looks down, “It is not proper, Jack, you know this.”

Jack leans in to whisper to him, “You have never backed down from a fight before, Hannibal, what scares you so much now that you are running from this one?”

Hannibal looks up at him, letting out a breath as he confesses, “Rejection. I have never wanted something so badly in all my life. I am an old man, he is a boy of eighteen.”

“Nineteen,” Jack laughs, “And I do not think he would turn you away.”

Hannibal picks up his glass and drinks it down quickly, the burn in his throat making it easier to focus as he sets it down with a clang.

“If I get rejected, will you comfort me?”

Jack laughs, “With more mead and loose women, maybe,” he pats Hannibal’s shoulder again, “I do not think you will need it.”

Hannibal smiles, standing, “I need only to find him now.”

“I think he is with his father,” Jack says, “Go to him.”

The long walk makes him calmer, it’s easier to move and when he finds himself standing outside King Henry’s throne room he pauses to listen.

“It is what I want father, more than anything.”

A pause, he hears the king laugh, “If that is the case, I certainly hope this marriage makes you happy my son.”

Will lets out a joyous laugh that breaks Hannibal in two, hearing him say, “It will, father! It will! I only need to ask and my heart will be filled completely in!”

He turns to leave, teeth bared as he fights the urge to break something or someone the anger at himself for thinking Will would even consider an old man as his match burning a hole in him the longer he dwells.

“Sir! Sir!”

Hannibal pauses, turning to see Will running towards him with a smile that he does not return. “You have remembered me then.”

Will pauses, a frown making Hannibal feel slightly better even though he feels petty for it. “I could not forget.”

“You seemed to the last week, I know you had other things occupying your time.”

Will swallows, visibly flustered now as he says, “Yes, my father wishes me to marry.”

Hannibal feels his hand curl around the sword against his hip, “Yes, I have heard.”

“I have decided…”

He looks up, cutting Will off. “As have I,” he tries not to let his feeling show when he declares, “I am going on another mission, my commission to the palace has been filled and I decided to move on.”

Will pales, stepping back. “I…oh. I did not know.”

Hannibal nods, looking away, “I do not think I am needed here any longer, and the castle bores me as it is.”

“You will be missed, knight,” Will’s voice is quiet and Hannibal looks up, frowning at the sorrow in the boy’s eyes.

“I will miss some things about it here as well. I wish you all the luck in the world, your highness.”

He turns and nearly runs from the hall, from Will, his bitterness and heartache burning to anger the further he gets away.

This place will only ruin him if he stays here longer and it would not take long to find another lord who wanted his services. He would see the king in the morning before he left, and then never think of him nor his son ever again.

Chapter 2

Hannibal spent the day avoiding the castle, roaming and hoping to see the Prince leave before he approached the King in regards to his departure.

Will seemed to have disappeared, no doubt to prepare his sonnets and love confession for the Princess and Hannibal tried not to let his bitterness show when he entered the castle again hours later.

The mood when he entered was somber, the servants glaring daggers at him as he moved and wondered if his leaving was that much of an inconvenience for the household though most had barely ever spoken to him since his commission began so many seasons ago.

The King seemed hostile upon his entry to the throne room, eyeing him with an anger he hadn't experienced from King Henry before.

"Knight," the King said, his eyes narrow, "I was told you wished to speak with me."

Hannibal nodded, suddenly just as angry at this man for even bringing that Princess before Will at all. "Yes, the end of my commission was some time ago and I believe it is time for me to move on."

The King's hands curled into the arms of the chair, his back was straighter and Hannibal took a step back almost feeling like he would be attacked at any moment.

"Yes, I believe that is an excellent idea. We cannot have you roaming these halls for much longer, my son does not need the distraction."

Hannibal felt a pit in his stomach, his lip snarling up without his permission.

"I was not aware that I was so bothersome to the Prince."

The King scoffed, "You were not? I have seen the two of you during your 'lessons' and the longing stares were enough to make most of the castle pity such a lovesick fool. I do not need that in Will's life, he has others who will not be so callous with his feelings."

Hannibal felt his cheeks redden at the implication. He had not realized his feelings were so easily read, even by the Prince's father no less.

"We would not want such a fool to be in the Prince's presence as he weds and takes such a beautiful princess as his wife, I suppose."

There was a huff of breath and Hannibal watched the King's eyes widen in surprise. "Knight, I was not talking of you," he suddenly smiled, "Though I now realize I could have been."

Hannibal frowned, "I do not understand."

The King stood and Hannibal knelt, worried he'd spoken out of turn. His head bowed he was surprised to feel the King's hand on his shoulder. "Stand, Hannibal."

He looked up and saw nothing but warmth staring back at him, standing as requested. "Your majesty, I am afraid I do not…"

The King's hand remained on him, patting once as he said, "Do go see my son, Hannibal. I do believe there has been a grave misunderstanding between you," he sighed, "I confess I did not wish to see my son wedding someone so much older than he but the anguish in your eyes at losing him makes me realize no other person in the kingdom will fight to share as much of their remaining life as they possibly can to be by his side."

Hannibal stepped back, "But the Princess…"

"Was a distraction I had hoped to lure Will's affection away to," he smiled, "I can see that is an impossibility."

Hannibal let out a rush of breath as he smiled, "You are certain of this?"

King Henry nodded, his smile widening as he spoke, "In all the years you have been with me, I would never have expected to see such adulation in your eyes. Go to him."

Hannibal bowed once more and quickly fled from the room, turning to the nearest maid and asking, "The Prince, where is the Prince?"

She glared at him, "For what should I tell you, sir? So you can hurt him again so carelessly? He deserves someone who…"

Hannibal growled, resisting the urge to grab her, "I need to tell him I love him and him only, please I beg of you to…"

Another maid, raven haired and looking much more even tempered, said, "Will is in his room, sir, he has been shut up there for hours."

Hannibal grabbed her hand and kissed it, "I thank you, milady," taking off up the stairs.

The Prince's quarters were off to their own side, far enough away from the King's but close to be sure of his safety. Hannibal had never been assigned to protection duty before and knew not the individual guards there, both glaring as he rounded the hallway.

"I need to speak with the Prince. It is a matter of much urgency."

The guards exchanged a look, both seeming to smirk before they said, "I believe he is indisposed, sir. I had heard you were leaving before nightfall, I suggest…"

Hannibal grabbed the guard who dare speak to him with such cheek, throwing the man against the door to hiss, "Do you dare to speak to a knight with such ill regard, you spineless…"

The door opened behind him and Will was there, his eyes red and tired as he regarded them. “Knight, is manhandling my guard what you have decided to do before you go?” Hannibal let the guard go and the man attempted to attack him, but Will held up his hand, “No. Let him speak.”

Hannibal swallowed back nerves as he let out his feelings, “I have been to see your father and been informed that I was misunderstanding our conversation earlier today. I would like to clear up that of which we spoke.”

Will frowned, his lips pouting out. “You were telling me you have decided to leave the castle indefinitely while I was attempting to ask you if I could,” Will’s cheeks reddened, “I am aware that I am much younger than you, sir, but my mind is full of nothing but wild fantasies of spending my nights in your arms and days counting down to the nights.”

“Will…”

Will’s embarrassment seemed to worsen the longer they stood there and he said, “I apologize for my ill timing and my misunderstanding of our conversations and lessons, I…I am quite embarrassed to be confessing to such a large audience with no answer from you in return.”

The guards both were stock still at the sides of Will’s door, Hannibal stepping forward as the Prince stepped back into his bedroom. “Then let us have privacy,” he teased, his smile warm,

Will’s eyes widened in surprise, stepping back and nearly stumbling as Hannibal did the same the door behind them closing just as Hannibal knelt down at his feet.

“My Prince, I apologize profusely for hurting you.”

“Knight…”

Hannibal looked up, “Hannibal, sire, please call me Hannibal.”

Will knelt down in front of him, his eyes wet as he laughed, “Is this an answer? I have no idea what…”

Hannibal resisted the urge to kiss his prince’s mouth, instead taking Will’s hand to his lips as he murmured, “I wish to marry you, Will, as soon as possible. Will you consent?”

Will launched himself at him, knocking Hannibal to the ground as he laughed and kissed his teacher’s mouth messily a first kiss that Hannibal was greedy to keep for himself.

He continued, his hand in Will’s hair as their lips slowed the quiet sighs and movement against each other more than indecent for two unmarrieds.

Hannibal pulled back, his hand on Will’s cheek. “We mustn’t. Will, please, do not be offended but we musn’t.”

Will sighed, kissing him again, “I am not a maid, nor am I…”

“You are an unmarried prince of the realm, and it is an impropriety I will not lay upon you,” he sat up and kept Will to his chest, “I love you, I would take what I was not allowed not before we wed.”

Will climbed in closer still, young and eager to learn as much as Hannibal was eager to take. He kissed his prince again, slowly tasting from lips to cheek following a path across Will’s neck.

“You say stop, but continue, I…oh Hannibal please I love you and I have thought of nothing but sparring together this way.”

Hannibal growled, breathless as he sat up and let Will fall to the floor. The Prince looked affronted, but sheepish as he stayed at Hannibal’s feet.

“You have not answered my question.”

Will smiled, kneeling up as his hands came to Hannibal’s sides. “I was not aware you gave one.”

Hannibal smiled, his hand on Will’s cheek once more. “Marry me?”

Will nodded, his hands traveling to the front of Hannibal’s trousers his hardness evident as he did so. “Yes.”

Hannibal leaned down as Will leaned up, his hands on the young Prince’s cheeks as they kissed. Will still did not stand as Hannibal righted himself, palming at his older love’s member without shame as he licked his lips.

“Will,” Hannibal attempted to step away but was caught, Will’s arms a vice.

“I am your Prince, and you have just agreed to defer to me in all things,” Will teased, his hand reaching beneath the fabric, “Have you not?”

“This is indecent,” Hannibal moaned as Will’s eager fingers found skin, stroking inside his undergarments the sensation nearly rendering him unable to stand.

Will tried to open his pants and he stopped him, Will sighing, “Very well,” as he continued and when Hannibal’s stifled cry filled the room Will stood, licking his hand experimentally before he kissed Hannibal again.

They kissed against the doorframe, Hannibal’s hand doing the same as Will’s had before but as he was turned Will was offended when Hannibal went to his knees without word, tearing into Will’s clothing to surround Will’s length in the warmth of his mouth.

The Prince bit off a moan, his hand in the Knight’s hair and when he came not long after he mumbled, “Not fair, sir, not at all fair,” as Hannibal continued to taste him.

“I could not help myself,” Hannibal confessed, standing as Will kissed him again, “I apologize.”

Will smiled, “No need. Now I believe we must go tell my father the good news.”

Hannibal stared down at Will’s exposed lower half, “I believe you need to change first, in my haste your pants are quite ruined.”

Will laughed and nodded once, stepping out of them and turning back to wink at him, “We could wait till later,” he offered, “You know…”

Hannibal shook his head, “I will wait outside, beloved, your guards are loyal but the maids will talk.”

Will pouted and said nothing as he left, the guards’ cheeks were red when he got outside to wait nodding to them both.

It did not take long for Will to change, the clothes he wore even thinner than the ones before them and his shirt hung open rather rakishly though Hannibal could not see an inch of hair on his chest. “You tempt me,” he growled, grabbing Will’s hand as they left down the hall.

Will kissed their joined hands, “In all fairness, Knight, you did so upon our very first meeting. Turnabout is fair play.”

Hannibal laughed and shook his head, “It was not intentional, I assure you. Majesty.”

Will smiled at him warmly, “Will. I believe I would wish for you to call me Will, after all that has passed between us formalities are a thing of the past.”

Hannibal kissed his hand, “Will, my beloved, you have made me so very happy.”

Will looked down at their hands and his eyes were misted when he whispered, “Not as happy as you’ve made me.”

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